

19 September 1966

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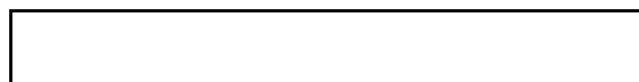
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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Laos: The chances are good that Souvanna Phouma will override the present challenge to his government--rejection of the government budget--and will remain Premier.

This latest in a series of recent confrontations between Souvanna and the National Assembly was precipitated by the assembly's action on 16 September. Souvanna, impatient with the assembly's eagerness for a greater political role, scornful of its "ineptness" and presently disinclined to compromise, wants to dissolve the assembly and to call for new elections. He was assured on 16 September of the army's support in any "political showdown" with the deputies and the next day he got cabinet approval for an approach to King Savang.

Souvanna, who will act against the assembly only with the King's backing, flew to the Royal capital on 17 September for two days of talks. The King, recognizing that Souvanna's high-handedness contributed to the present tension, can be expected to press for a compromise. If necessary, to preserve the present government, the King will probably agree reluctantly to dissolve the assembly.

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UK/Rhodesia: The Rhodesian mood in the wake of last week's Commonwealth conference is defiant, but both the Smith regime and the British seem willing to continue their dialogue.

Whites in Rhodesia were dismayed at the conference's communiqué, which in effect was an ultimatum to come to terms with Britain by Christmas. They also were shocked at Britain's willingness to consider further economic sanctions against them after that date. Nevertheless, they seem increasingly confident that they can survive such sanctions. They are unlikely to compromise on any essential point.

There is also broad support among Smith's followers for declaring Rhodesia a republic, a move which would further weaken the tenuous constitutional links which Britain is trying to use as a basis for reconciliation.

[REDACTED]

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Brazil: Growing student unrest is causing vague but perceptible uneasiness within the Castello Branco administration.

Small demonstrations and strikes involving several hundred students began early this month over minor issues. Inept handling by university authorities and the use of police to combat the demonstrations have angered and drawn in a far greater number of students.

University students are on strike in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, and Belo Horizonte, and police are concerned that unrest may spread to Brasilia and Goiania. Police used tear gas to break up a student march in Rio on 15 September. Students in Belo Horizonte attempted a solidarity march, then took refuge in the law school when thwarted. They have repulsed attempts to clear the school by pelting police with stones, chairs, and books.

Relations between the government and students have been strained since ousting of Leftist President Goulart in 1964 and subsequent government efforts to control the student movement. Leftist forces have regained influence in some sectors of the student movement and are looking for opportunities to foster unrest. Although there has not been a major confrontation, the extreme left-wing student group--Popular Action--the outlawed Brazilian Communist Party, and leading political opponents of the government can be expected to try to keep agitation alive.

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NOTES

Israel-Syria: Tension along the Israeli-Syrian border remains at a high level, and Israel is likely to retaliate when the next terrorist infiltration from Syria occurs. The shaky regime in Damascus probably cannot control its border units, which may be abetting the infiltrators. Despite Syria's claim that Egypt would act in the event of a clash with Israel, it is very doubtful that other Arab countries would give the Syrians anything more substantial than vocal support. [REDACTED]

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Yemen: The new cabinet, headed by President Sallal, is dominated by pro- Egyptian ministers, indicating that Cairo has for now abandoned any pretense of self-government in Yemen. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] A council of important tribal leaders has also been set up in a move aimed at recapturing the waning support of republican tribes. [REDACTED]

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